



Home of the Blues

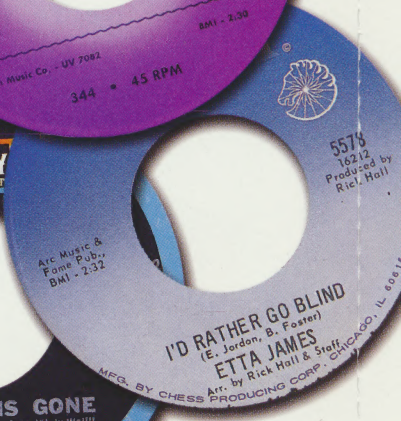
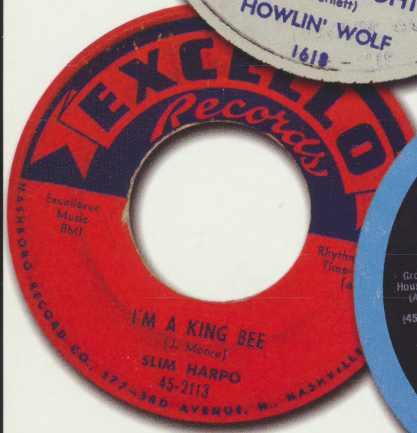


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Little School Girl
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Luther's Blues
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with Eric Clapton**
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Turn On Your Love Light
14. **B.B. King**
The Thrill Is Gone

**MCA**
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Home of the Blues.

More than ever, Universal Music Group is the caretaker for the voluminous archives of the Chess/Checker, Duke/Peacock, Excello, ABC, Impulse, MCA, Motown, Polydor, Mercury, and A&M labels, Universal Music Group has unrivaled resources when it comes to the blues. **This all-star anthology is a perfect example**—it slices a wide

swath through the venerable genre, from seminal classics of decades past to challenging work by young artists poised to escort the idiom into the new millennium.

No one more eloquently personifies the class and dignity of the blues than the great **B.B. King**. A major rhythm and blues star since the early 1950s,

he crossed into the pop realm with a flourish in 1970 when his majestic “The Thrill Is Gone” introduced B.B. and his best gal Lucille to a new audience. All of a sudden, the guitar master was guesting on Ed Sullivan’s TV variety program—a sure sign of mainstream recognition. And he’s still going strong.

bobby “blue” bland



Equally at home crooning an intimate blues ballad or wailing a gospel-enriched soul workout, **Bobby “Blue” Bland** began his career on the fertile Memphis scene. Like B.B., Bobby remains one of the top names in the blues field. Bland scored his greatest triumphs for Houston-based Duke Records from 1952 to 1972. Joe Scott’s brassy arrangement framed Bobby’s melismatic vocal for “Turn On Your Love Light,” a raveup that barely missed topping the R&B charts in late 1961.

Chicago had but one blues king during the 1950s, and his name was **Muddy Waters**. Muddy’s peerless crew set an impossibly lofty standard for all Windy City blues combos that followed. In 1954, Muddy enjoyed a huge hit with his immortal reading of Willie Dixon’s “I’m Your Hoochie Coochie Man,” his studio band featuring harpist Little Walter and guitarist Jimmy Rogers. Chess Records was also at its early zenith during the mid-’50s, its star-studded roster of Chicago blues icons truly devastating.

Though she had recorded a sleek string of smashes in Chicago



muddy waters

for Chess' Argo and Cadet subsidiaries throughout the '60s, **Etta James** traveled to Rick Hall's studios in Muscle Shoals, Alabama in 1967. The result was the southern soul piledriver "Tell Mama," a Top Ten R&B hit before the year was through. Etta remains a gloriously assured onstage presence whose musical pursuits lately have encompassed blues, soul, jazz, and even a taste of country.

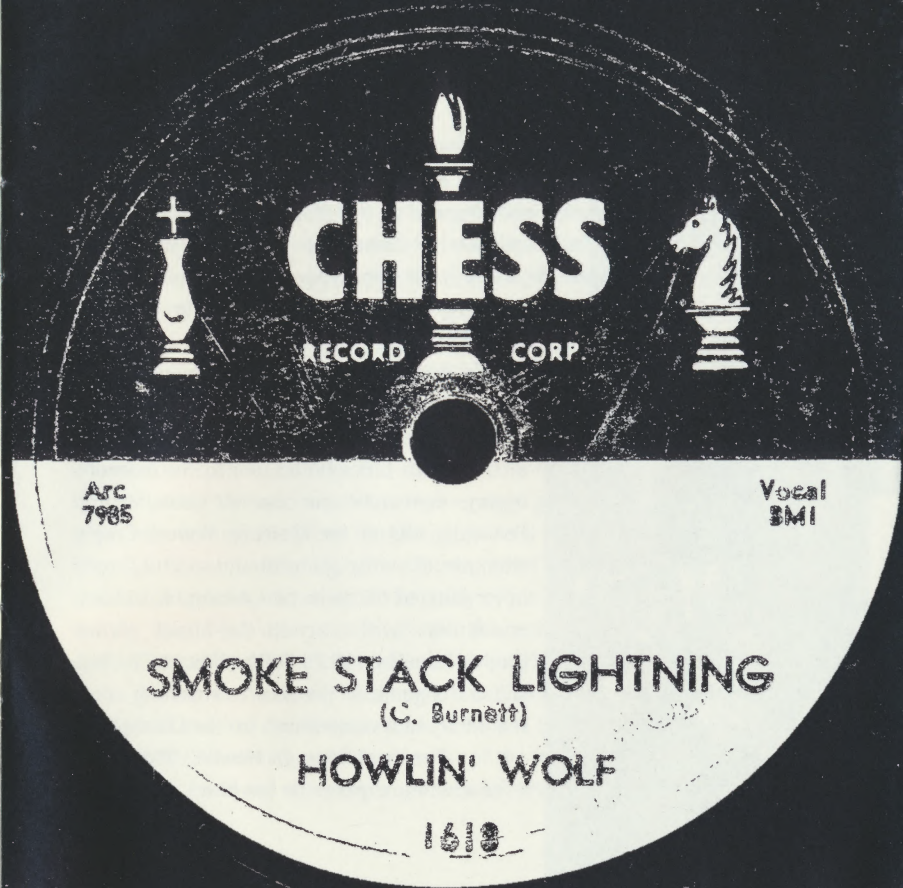
Having recently defected from the Yardbirds, **Eric Clapton** joined **John Mayall's Blues Breakers** in 1965. While their musical association didn't last all that long, it resulted in a blazing album (cut in London the following year) that ranks with the greatest British blues accomplishments of all. Clapton's stinging guitar and Mayall's boisterous keyboards were a formidable combination; the pair attacked Otis Rush's tempo-shifting 1958 gem "All Your Love" with youthful temerity.

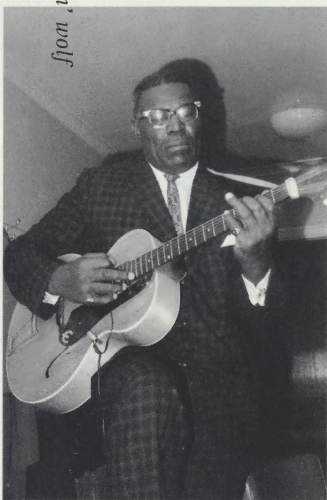
Buddy Guy has inherited the regal status of his idol Muddy Waters around Chicago, wearing his blues superstar crown proudly. His mercurial lead guitar pyrotechnics and frenzied vocals were honed to a razor-sharp edge

during his 1960-1967 stint at Chess, where he toiled as a session axeman behind Muddy and Sonny Boy Williamson in addition to waxing his own sides. Guy covered Bay Area singer Tiny Powell's chilling "My



Buddy Guy



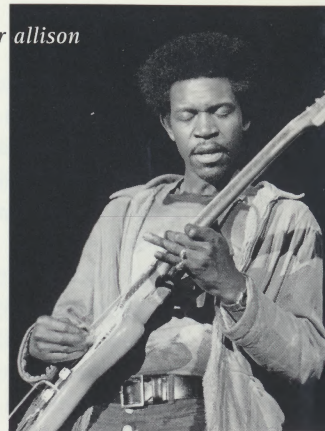


Time After Awhile" in 1964 and emerged with something special.

The brooding blues and sledgehammer boogies of **John Lee Hooker** are as timeless and singular as the idiom allows. The Boogie Man has recorded in abundance for countless companies since he first crashed the bigtime in 1949 with his hypnotic "Boogie Chillen," employing a disparate supporting cast along the way. For the mournful "It Serves You Right To Suffer" (cut in '65 for Impulse), he effortlessly found a common groove ground with jazzmen Milt Hinton on bass and drummer Panama Francis.

Anointed as the young and handsome savior of the 1980s blues boom due to the extraordinary crossover success of his Strong Persuader album for Mercury, **Robert Cray's** strengths as a crisp guitarist and soulful singer never faltered for an instant during his sudden encounter with across-the-board fame (underscored by 1992's "I Was Warned"). Cray still crafts some of the most compelling contemporary blues statements on the CD shelves.

The feral roar of **Howlin' Wolf** is a bone-chilling experience for blues neophytes



and aficionados alike. Born Chester Arthur Burnett, the mighty Wolf made his early Chess waxings for Memphis producer Sam Phillips before relocating to Chicago in late 1953. He howled his way through the modally mesmerizing "Smokestack Lightnin'" in January of '56 with longtime cohorts Willie Johnson and Hubert Sumlin manning the guitars and was rewarded with a Top Ten R&B hit for their trouble.

Berry Gordy's Motown empire was never known for its blues catalog. But in 1972, the firm signed **Luther Allison**, a young, high-energy guitarist who learned his blues on Chicago's West Side alongside Freddy King. Of Allison's three Motown albums, 1974's Luther's Blues came closest to capturing the dynamic intensity of his rapid-fire fretwork and searing vocals (its title track is aboard this collection). Sadly, Luther died of cancer in 1997 in the midst of a remarkable comeback.

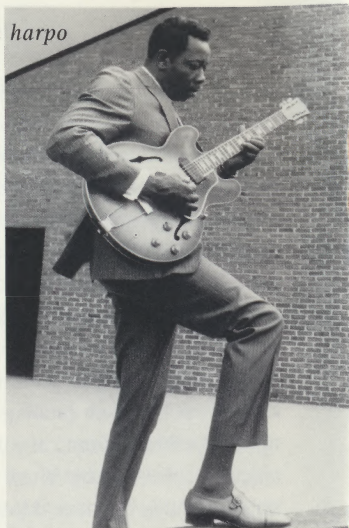
No one has seriously challenged **Koko Taylor's** royal standing as Chicago's Queen of the Blues in ages. Koko left Memphis for the Windy City in 1953, eventually catching the ear of the influential Willie Dixon. Along with his own un-issued rendition of "Wang Dang Doodle" in

slim harpo

1954, Dixon produced a fine version by the Wolf in 1960. But neither equalled the growling ebullience of Koko's reading for Checker, a major 1966 hit at a time when Chicago blues seldom blasted up the R&B charts.

Swamp blues producer J.D. Miller always took credit for instructing **Slim Harpo** to sing with the distinctive nasal drawl that came to characterize Harpo's sound (along with his plaintive harmonica playing). Miller's Crowley, Louisiana studio was the site where Harpo (born James Moore) waxed his laconic "I'm A King Bee" for Excello in 1957. Though not a national hit, Harpo's lascivious anthem has endured as a standard, covered by everyone from Muddy Waters to the Rolling Stones.

Call it blues-rock or rock with an unshakable blues base, the hard-charging hybrid brewed up by the **Allman Brothers** during the late '60s and early '70s hit like a cyclone. Slide guitar virtuoso Duane Allman and his brother Gregg (who contributed keyboards and soul-



steeped vocals) had their own concept of what the blues was all about, often involving extended jams that would have been unthinkable in Muddy's day. Waters cut the original "Trouble No More" in 1955, long before the Allmans gave it their blistering southern-fried treatment.

Unlike John Lee "Sonny Boy" Williamson (who cut the original version in 1937) and a cadre of other greats who have recorded it, **Jonny Lang** is young enough to sing "Good Morning Little School Girl" and not invite pointed accusations of lechery. The teen prodigy burst onto the national scene with his 1996 A&M hit album *Lie to Me*. The sky's the limit now; Lang has been serving as opening act for the Rolling Stones lately, and he's amassing more of a devoted following every day. Welcome to the Home of the Blues!

—*Bill Dahl*

SOURCES: *The Big Book of Blues*, by Robert Santelli (New York: Penguin Books, 1993); *Joel Whitburn's Top R&B Singles 1942-1988*, by Joel Whitburn (Menomonee Falls, WI: Record Research Inc., 1988)



1. **Jonny Lang**
**Good Morning,
Little School Girl**

(Sonny Boy Williamson)
Recorded Minneapolis & Memphis, 1996
Jonny Lang (vocal-lead guitar); Billy Franzee (rhythm guitar); Ted Larson (baritone guitar); David Smith (bass); Pat Hayes (harmonica); Ricky Peterson (Hammond B-3 organ); Bruce McCabe (Wurlitzer piano); Rob Stupka (drums)
Produced by David Z
Originally on A&M 31454 06402, "Lie To Me"

2. **The Allman Brothers**
Trouble No More

(McKinley Morganfield)
Recorded New York City, September, 1969
Duane Allman (lead, slide, & acoustic guitars); Greg Allman (vocal-organ); Dickey Betts (lead guitar); Berry Oakley (bass); Butch Trucks & Jaimoe (drums)
Originally on Atco LP 308, "The Allman Brothers Band"

3. **Luther Allison**
Luther's Blues

(Luther Allison)
Recorded Detroit, 1974
Luther Allison (vocal-guitar); Paul White or Tom Curry (piano); K.J. Knight or Andrew Smith (drums); Bob Babbitt or Gary Beem (bass); Ray Goodman or Gene Block (rhythm guitar)
Originally on Gordy LP 967, "Luther's Blues"

4. **John Mayall's Bluesbreakers**
with Eric Clapton
All Your Love

(Otis Rush/Willie Dixon)
Recorded London, April, 1966
John Mayall (vocal-guitar); Eric Clapton (guitar); John McVie (bass); Hughie Flint (drums)
Produced by Mike Vernon
Originally on London LP 800 086-2, "Bluesbreakers with Eric Clapton"

5. **Buddy Guy**
My Time After Awhile

(Ronald Bager-Robert Gedding-Sheldon Feinberg)
Recorded Chicago, June 10, 1964
Buddy Guy (vocal-guitar); Jarrett Gibson (tenor sax); Donald Hankins (baritone sax); Leonard Caston (piano); Jack Meyers (bass); Clifton James (drums)
Originally Chess single 1899

6. **Slim Harpo**
I'm A King Bee

(James Moore)
Recorded Crowley, Louisiana, March, 1957
Slim Harpo (vocal-harmonica); Guitar Gable (guitar); Clinton "Fats" Perrodin (bass); Clarence "Jockey" Etienne (drums)
Originally Excello single 2113

7. **Howlin' Wolf**
Smokestack Lightnin'

(Chester Burnett)
Recorded Chicago, January, 1956
Howlin' Wolf (vocal-harmonica); Hosea Lee Kennard (piano); Jody Williams, Hubert Sumlin (guitars); Willie Dixon (bass); Earl Phillips (drums)
Produced by Leonard & Phil Chess
Originally Chess single 1618

8. **Muddy Waters**
(I'm Your) Hoochie Coochie Man

(Willie Dixon)
Recorded Chicago, January 7, 1954
Muddy Waters (vocal-guitar); Little Walter (harmonica); Jimmy Rogers (guitar); Otis Spann (piano); Willie Dixon (bass); Fred Below (drums)
Produced by Leonard & Phil Chess & Willie Dixon
Originally Chess single 1560

9. **John Lee Hooker**
It Serves You Right To Suffer

(John Lee Hooker)
Recorded New York City, November 23, 1965
John Lee Hooker (vocal-guitar); Barry Galbraith (guitar); Milt Hinton (bass); Panama Francis (drums)
Produced by Bob Thiele
Originally on Impulse LP 9013, "It Serves You Right To Suffer"

10. **Koko Taylor**
Wang Dang Doodle

(Willie Dixon)
Recorded Chicago, December 7, 1965
Koko Taylor (vocal); Willie Dixon (additional vocal); Gene Barge, Donald Hankins (saxes); Lafayette Leake (piano); Buddy Guy, Johnny "Twist" Williams (guitars); Jack Meyers (bass); Fred Below (drums)
Produced by Willie Dixon
Originally Checker single 1135

11. **Etta James**
I'd Rather Go Blind

(Ellington Jordan-Billy Foster)
Recorded Muscle Shoals, Alabama, August 23, 1967
Etta James (vocal); Gene "Bowlegs" Miller (trumpet); Charles Chalmers, Aaron Varnell, Floyd Newman (saxes); Carl Banks (organ); Dewey Oldham (organ-piano); Jimmy Ray Johnson, Albert Lowe, Jr. (guitars); David Hood (bass); Roger Hawkins (drums)
Produced by Rick Hall
Originally Cadet 5578

12. **Robert Cray**
I Was Warned

(Robert Cray-Dennis Walker)
Recorded 1992, Berkeley, California
Robert Cray (guitar-vocals); Tim Kaihatsu (guitar); Jim Pugh (keyboards); Karl Severid (bass); The Memphis Horns: Andrew Love (tenor sax) & Wayne Jackson (trumpet & trombone); Kevin Hayes (drums)
Produced by Dennis Walker
Originally on Mercury LP 512721, "I Was Warned"

13. **Bobby Bland**
Turn On Your Love Light

(Deadir Malone-Joseph Scott)
Recorded Nashville, September 27, 1961
Bobby Bland (vocal); probably with Joe Scott, Melvin Jackson (trumpets); Pluma Davis (trombone); Johnny Board, Jimmy Beck (saxes); Rayfield Davers (baritone sax); Teddy Reynolds (piano); Wayne Bennett (guitar); Hamp Simmons (bass); John "Jabo" Starks (drums)
Produced by Joe Scott
Originally Duke 344

14. **B.B. King**
The Thrill Is Gone

(Rick Darnell-Roy Hawkins)
Recorded New York City, June 24-25, 1969
B.B. King (vocal-guitar); Paul Harris (keyboards); Hugh McCracken (guitar); Gerald "Fingers" Jemmott (bass); Herbie Lovelle (drums); Strings & horns arranged by Bert "Supercharts" DeCoteaux
Produced by Bill Szymczyk
Originally BluesWay 61032

Compiled and Produced by Andy McKaie

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Production Coordination: Beth Stempel

Thanks to Richie Gallo, Bill Levenson, & Harry Weinger

Also Available:

Blues Classics - 1927 to 1969 (multi-artist box set) (MCA03-11441)
Chess Blues (multi-artist box set) (CHD4-9340)
Chess Blues Classics, 1947 To 1958 (CHD-9369)
Chess Blues Classics, 1957 To 1967 (CHD-9368)
Chess Blues Guitar, 1949 To 1969 (CHD2-9393)
Chess Blues-Rock Songbook (CHD2-9389)
Chess Blues Piano Greats (CHD2-9385)



NORTH



Home
of the
Blues

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